

## News Release

### For immediate release

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# Coalition Calls on Blue Ribbon Commission to Rethink the Role of Regents Exams

**June 26, 2023 (NEW YORK CITY)** — Today, the Coalition for Multiple Pathways to a Diploma—a group of more than 80 advocacy organizations, educators, and families from across New York State—released a research brief, [It's Time to #RethinkRegents Exams](#), in advance of the upcoming meeting of the NYS Blue Ribbon Commission on Graduation Measures. As the Commission discusses how best to measure students' readiness for post-secondary life and develops its recommendations, the Coalition is calling on the State to end the practice of requiring students to pass five Regents exams in order to graduate from high school.

The new [brief](#) summarizes existing literature to show that the State's current policy is not grounded in research, has not benefited New York's students, and puts the state out of step with the rest of the nation. For example:

- A number of studies have found that exit exams can increase high school dropout rates, especially for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.
- There is *no* evidence that exit exams increase student achievement, raise the value of a high school diploma in the labor market, or convey other benefits to students who pass them; as a report commissioned by the State Education Department (SED) noted in 2022, exit exams are "not positively associated with any college or career outcomes."
- Rather than an impartial measure of student learning, standardized tests are an unreliable gauge of graduation-readiness. Research has found that factors as arbitrary as the weather can significantly affect a student's performance on a Regents exam, while high school GPA is more strongly correlated with success in college than standardized test scores.
- While exit exam requirements were once popular across the country, many states have reversed course in recent years, making New York one of just eight states that maintains such a policy.

"The role of the Regents exams has continually evolved and changed over the past 150 years," said Sarah Part, Senior Policy Analyst at Advocates for Children of New York, the organization that coordinates the Coalition for Multiple Pathways. "We now know from research that exit exam policies like New York's fail to improve the quality of teaching and learning—and risk causing significant harm to our students. It's time for New York to once again rethink Regents exams and revise its graduation framework to meet the needs of the current era."